

Lead Poisoning

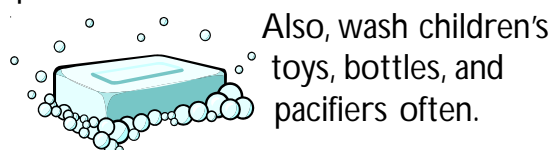
Lead has no useful purpose in the body. Lead can damage the brain and nerves, cause learning and behavioral problems, lower IQ levels, and interfere with growth and hearing. Lead poisoning is caused by either swallowing or inhaling lead or lead dust. Most often there are no symptoms of lead poisoning.

You can lower your child's risk of lead poisoning by:

- Frequent Handwashing
- Keeping your home clean
- Testing and follow up
- Making good food choices

• Frequent handwashing

Lead dust may be swallowed when children put objects (toys, food, etc.) or their fingers into their mouths. Always have children wash their hands and face before eating, drinking, and sleeping, and encourage them not to put their hands into their mouths.



Also, wash children's toys, bottles, and pacifiers often.

• Keeping your home clean

Homes built before 1978 may contain lead paint. When this paint is flaking or chipping, a child may eat the chips because they have a sweet taste. Even if the paint is not chipping, the dust created by the friction of opening windows and doors contains enough lead to poison a child. Dirt and dust containing lead can be removed by wet cleaning floors, windowsills, and places where children play. Wet clean using warm water and a general all-purpose cleaner. Use disposable cleaning cloths. Rinse with clean water. A HEPA vacuum should be used to clean carpet and rugs. This type of vacuum will trap lead particles and prevent them from being released back into the air.



• Testing and follow up

It is important for children to be tested for lead poisoning. A simple blood test may be the only way to know if a child is lead poisoned.

Children under the age of six are at greatest risk for lead poisoning. Ask your doctor or healthcare provider to test your child!



• Making good food choices

The food that your child eats – how often and the overall pattern – can make a difference in how much lead gets into your child's blood. Children with empty stomachs absorb more lead than children with full stomachs. Children should eat four to six small meals a day.

Serve foods that are a good source of **calcium, iron, and vitamin C**. These foods help protect your child from lead poisoning.

The following lists include foods that are good sources of calcium, iron, and vitamin C.

Good food sources of calcium:

- reduced fat milk and yogurt
- reduced fat cheese and cottage cheese
- ice milk or frozen yogurt
- foods made with reduced fat milk such as pudding, custard, cream soup
- greens, spinach, rhubarb
- navy beans, great northern and baked beans



Between meals offer a small snack such as:

- cereal with low-fat milk
- fruit (apple or pear slices, oranges or bananas)
- frozen fruit juice pops or fruit smoothies
- whole wheat crackers with cheese

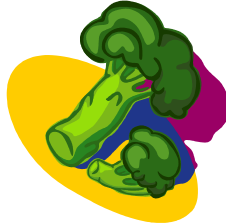
Good food sources of iron:

- lean red meats
- fish
- chicken
- iron-fortified cereals
- dried fruits (raisins, prunes)
- lentils, chickpeas, pinto beans, navy beans, blackeye peas, great northern beans, black beans, homemade baked beans, soybeans, kidney beans, red beans, lima beans



Good food sources of vitamin C:

- oranges, grapefruit, tangerines, strawberries, cantaloupe
- juices (orange, grapefruit, pineapple, or those that are vitamin C enriched)
- tomatoes, bell peppers, greens, kale, broccoli



Take measures to reduce your child's exposure to lead.

If you have questions or need more information about lead poisoning, contact your local health department, physician, or the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services at (573) 751-6102.



Preventing Lead Poisoning

Tips for Families

Apple Pizza

Makes 1 serving.

- fresh flour tortillas
- raisins
- peanut butter
- apple

1. Spread some peanut butter over the tortilla.
2. Cut the apple into thin slices and put them all over the peanut butter — like a pizza topping.
3. Then sprinkle the raisins over the tortilla. Eat and enjoy!



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention
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Alternate forms of this publication for persons with disabilities may be obtained by contacting the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services at the number listed above. Hearing impaired citizens telephone 1-800-735-2966. VOICE 1-800-735-2466.

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